

## FAITH and REASON TOGETHER

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### FAITH as INHERITANCE

# EVOLUTION 101

## 1. Inheritance / Birthright

Ownership / Indentureship

## 2. Faith & Reason

What is Faith? What is Reason? How do they “belong” together?

Like love and marriage: “you can’t have one without the other.”

Mutuality / Codependency

## 3. “Faith searching intelligence” (St. Anselm: *fides quaerens intellectum*)

## 4. Faith and “critical” thinking — [*critical* as in “critique” not criticize]

“Intelligence searching faith” (*intellectus quaerens fidem*)

## 5. Instruction or Indoctrination? Vatican II vs. Tridentine Theology

**Child faith:** “unless you become as one of these...”

**Adult faith:** the ongoing process of conscience-formation, i.e., faith searching intelligence, intelligence searching faith.

Vatican II Theological Rationale (J. Courtney Murray, SJ): “faith supposes reason as grace supposes nature”

**Sylvester Steffen, 2011 Lenten Reflection**

## FAITH INHERITANCE LIVES ON RENEWED IN EVERY GENERATION

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<http://ncronline.org/blogs/essays-theology/bishop-ruiz-taught-us-evolve>

Submitted by LittleBear (not verified) on Mar. 14, 2011.

Submitted by Sylvester "Pat" Steffen on Mar. 13, 2011.

You stated: "LittleBear, I have a question that is both academic and practical. In reference to Anselm's "fides quaerens intellectum", can the word "quaerens" mean both "questioning" as in doubting, and "searching" as in honest and open questing? Questioning implies doubt, but searching implies serious dialogue in pursuit of knowledge, truth, and belief. In the latter understanding of "quaerens", faith and reason are reciprocally respectful and understood to be necessarily codependent, so that from the perspective of the mutuality of faith and reason, IT IS JUST AS MEANINGFUL TO SAY "intellectus quaerens fidem" as it is to say "fides quaerens intellectum." This reciprocal understanding of faith and reason is intuitively honest, respectful and appreciative of mutuality, codependency and complementarity.

"As I understand, church faith professes categorically that "faith is not certitude." Except—wisdom is the conscious web of certitude experienced in the reciprocal consciousness of evolving faith/reason, a deep intuitional inheritance of every person. Consciousness (wisdom) is evolving certitude, based on best experience and insights of common humanity (what is "universal faith" <http://www.gather.com/viewArticle.action?articleId=281474979128735>), part of which, admittedly, is the enigmatic awareness of the inherent uncertainty of life and the transformational universe."

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Hi, Pat, I have to begin by stating that I 'cut my teeth' learning and using a Thomistic pattern of explanation (also not without its critics). But it has been given contemporary expression in Bernard Lonergan's writings.

In trying to craft an intelligent response to Melissa---I was attempting to display the vast array of Catholic theology in the 21st century and their place in (as you stated it) the "pursuit of knowledge, truth, and belief." What does theology conceived in Anselmian fashion as "faith seeking understanding" mean in light of the many theological styles that we have inherited from the 20th century, from what Fergus Kerr has called "the Heroic Generation"?

Believe it or not, perhaps Hans Urs von Balthasar (often called the greatest Catholic theologian of the 20th century) might offer an answer to your question. Yes, and I know that he is a favorite of those who call themselves "orthodox" or "solid" Catholics. Aquinas once said 'the truth is the truth, no matter who states it.' So perhaps Balthasar will serve us quite well. And the word here is 'paradox.' Is questioning---always doubt? Can it not mean an extremely serious quest for the truth? And Balthasar would answer,'yes.'

In the first volume of his breathtaking five-volume "Theo-Drama," Balthasar gives attention to the drama of human existence by using writers like Shakespeare, George Bernanos, Bertolt Brecht, Eugene Ionesco, and Arthur Miller in a kind of prolegomenon to his understanding of Christian existence as "theodramatic."

In his theodramatic approach, Balthasar teaches us that as actors in history, we share in the Son's mission, under the Holy Spirit's direction. Just as an actor's role in a theatrical drama constitutes a limited part of the play for a particular purpose, the finite lives of persons who share in the mission of Christ, no matter their life span, disclose meaning that is relevant for the whole of history. And that requires a faith---but it is without human certitude.

He utilizes the theater to illuminate the risk, questions, doubts and gravity of human life, the catastrophes and tensions that constitute our existence. He uses it to show that in our finite time span, we often struggle to evolve for the better, even when we are under judgment and even in the face of death---and we gain wisdom here.

In commenting upon Balthasar, the late British theologian Donald MacKinnon noted that in dealing with real evils---such as the Holocaust or the pathos of the reality of evil---God in the incarnation and passion of Christ is able to step over to his opponent's side and, from within, help him reach justice and freedom.

That is why I so strongly believe that the challenge of this 21st generation is to integrate the lasting achievements of the theologians of the Heroic Generation into a renewed standard theology. And I do believe that Balthasar would stand applauding the move.